

AGENDA
COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT CITY HALL
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2016
6:30 P. M.

The Public Hearing for *INPUT ON COMMUNITY NEEDS AND PRIORITIES FOR PUBLIC FACILITIES, NEIGHBORHOOD REVITATLIZATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT* was postponed until the November meeting.

A regular meeting was held by City Council on Tuesday, October 11, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. over which Mayor Bobby L. Davis presided. Council members Michael Baker, Ralph Atkinson, Ronald Atkinson, Odessa Gregg, Joseph Frazier and Emerson Hunt were present. Also present were City Administrator Alan Ammons, City Treasurer Patricia Brown, City Clerk Pam Jones and City Attorney Kenneth Davis.

Mayor Davis called the meeting to order and Councilwoman Gregg gave the opening prayer. Mr. Ammons led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Davis welcomed citizens, guests and the press. (Hometown TV).

Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on September 13, 2016, and special meeting on September 22, 2016, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson; motion carried.

Street Superintendent Ronnie Sanders, was named *September Employee of the Month* and received a gift certificate. Mayor Davis stated that Mr. Sanders was doing an excellent job for the City and keeping Marion beautiful. Mr. Sanders thanked the Mayor for this award and commented that he could not do it without the help of his men.

The Mayor's Monthly Beautification award will be presented next month.

Mayor Bobby L. Davis requested a Resolution in honor Colonel James Page, to be signed by Council members. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to create a Resolution for Colonel James Page, seconded by Councilman Emerson Hunt; motion carried. The Resolution will be presented to Mrs. Page at the November Council meeting.

Mr. Dan Vismore was unable to be here to present the Comprehensive Plan Update. He will be here for the November meeting, which will also include a Public Hearing.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to approve 1st reading on **ORDINANCE 16-09, AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT TGE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF THE CITY OF MARION, SOUTH CAROLINA,** seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson; motion carried.

Regarding the demolition on the Smith-Collins storage building, Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to accept the low bid of \$7,900 from Herrington Construction, seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Ammons commented that the Withlacoochee Draining Project has been completed. The CTC project for the Council on Aging is still outstanding. He would like to get Council's permission to ask for more CTC funds and has list of items that need to be addressed including resurfacing Middleton Street from South Main to Gibson Street, Huggins Street from Bobby L. Davis Blvd. to South Main, Bobby L. Davis Blvd. from Liberty Street to Reaves Street and Gibson Street from Liberty to Fladger Street. Also \$30,000 for sidewalk repairs and \$30,000 for driveway repairs. Councilman Ralph Atkinson asked if something should be added to sidewalk repairs due to trees coming up thru the sidewalks to which Mr. Ammons stated that sidewalk repairs could be changed to \$50,000. \$30,000 will do about 19-20 driveways, \$10,000 for street signs and the drainage project from Gregg to Liberty will be about \$520,000, There is a meeting next week and Mr. Ammons would like to get Council's approval to ask for this, he doesn't expect we will get all of this at that particular meeting. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion for Mr. Ammons to try and get these CTC projects approved, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried. Mr. Ammons and Mayor Davis hope to have a package ready at the next Council meeting for Council's consideration on new CTC projects. Mr. Ammons commented that the "Slow Down" discussed last month, run about \$5.00 each. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to purchase 50 signs for \$250.00, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried. The money will come from the Public Safety budget and the signs will be given to Council members to place in areas in their district and in areas where there are heavy speeders. Councilman Ralph Atkinson commented that Chief Tennie may know better where they should go. Mr. Ammons informed Council that after Hurricane Matthew they were tied up on Saturday with rescuing people from Strawberry Street, Watsonia Street, Jones Avenue, Walnut Street and Thomas Trailer Park. There were approximately 100 people who were evacuated and carried to the shelter. On Sunday we had five contractors lined up to come in to work and started doing what is called PUSH, which is what SCDOT says we can do and apply for FEMA funds and be reimbursed

for what is done in the first 70 hours and that is what we did. 95% of that was completed by lunchtime on Monday. After that we worked the City crews and the only trees that would still be down are those in water or have power lines running through them. Most streets are now passable. The debris will be picked up by Dot (we have a contract) and they will dispose of the debris on all state owned streets, which will leave us about 12 streets, and they will also pick up debris on those and we will pay the non-federal share for that to be done. Councilman Ralph asked if this would be similar to the way the ice storm was handled and Mr. Ammons responded that it was. Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson inquired as to why we can't use local people who have the equipment to do this type stuff and allow them make some income. Mr. Ammons responded that in the first 70 hours we can use locals, like we did, but once it passes that, DOT bids this out and has contractors lined up. Our local people can work with them as they did during the ice storm. At this point power has been restored to about 20% of our residents and more gas stations opened today. We have had fire and law enforcement support coming from across the state. In response to Councilwoman Gregg's question concerning when power was expected to be restored to 30 people in her area, he responded that the crews were working as hard as they could and there are approximately 7,000 service workers in this area. Councilman Hunt asked that Mr. Ammons let any indigents know where they could go for assistance to which Mr. Ammons responded that anyone who needs assistance going forward should call 911 and they will be transferred to the EOC and the appropriate agency will assist them. Mr. Ammons stated that we were under a boil water advisory at this time, but it appears that it may just be a pressure problem. He suggested that all citizens call the County and get on Code Red alert system, which is how most people are being informed. Mayor Davis stated that he would make some comments later in the meeting, and that the President signed a declaration declaring 15 counties a disaster area, in which Marion was included, and we will have FEMA in our area shortly. Mr. Ammons reminded Council that fall sports are now in full swing and encouraged them to stop by Watsonia for football, flag football and fall girls' softball.

CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE

Attorney Kenneth Davis had nothing to report at this time. He commented that after the storms of this and last year, we should thank God that we were not injured even though we may have had some property damage. We also appreciate people like the Mayor, Mr. Ammons, Mr. Sanders and Chief Tennie for being dedicated around the clock to this recovery. Attorney Davis stated that if there was anything they could do to help please let them know

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Mayor Davis commented that Council received the Departmental Reports in their packets.

DISTRICTS AND CITY UPDATE FROM COUNCIL & MAYOR

Councilman Michael Baker commented that we were truly blessed in Marion, considering we had more rain than most places in the state.

Councilman Joseph Frazier thanked the Sanitation Department for doing a dynamic job. He offered some constructive criticism to Mr. Sanders report and asked if street names could be used instead of map numbers, as that would be helpful for Council to know exactly where the property listed is located. Mr. Ammons commented that the street could be listed on the report. He asked Chief Tennie if he was going to plan another meet and greet at the Police Department as it had been a year since the last one and it is good for the community. District 4 held a meeting with the Solicitor regarding the problems with the juveniles. He explained that it was up to the judges to decide the penalty in handling those cases. Councilman Frazier commented that we should amend our curfew for students 10:00 p.m. and if a child is not in school and wandering the streets then something should be done about that. If they have a job, their employer could write a note stating such. In discussing this with Chief Tennie, he was told it would out a strain on the officers, but if they break-in to something, that will also put a strain on the officers. During the storm there was a 6:00 p.m. curfew and they still broke into houses and stores. Councilman Frazier would like to amend the curfew to 10:00 p.m. and would like to get a second on that. Mayor Davis responded that this would looked at and brought back to the next meeting.

Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson commented that he agreed with Councilman Baker in that we were very fortunate to withstand the storm the way we did. We had a lot of devastation and he thanked the city workers and volunteers who got out and helped. He further commented that when we get halfway caught up or in control, maybe we could extend a helping hand to Nichols in some way because they are in real trouble over there and hopes that we will do whatever we can to assist them. Mayor Davis commented that he met with Mayor Lawson Battle today and extended to him that we are willing to do what we can to help them. Our Fire Chief was over there all night helping bring people out of the flooded areas. Mayor Pro-tem Atkinson commented that's how we are around here, Chief Cooper was in Nichols assisting others when there was a huge tree on his house and rather than taking care of his own house, he was over there helping the folks in Nichols get out.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson reiterated what everyone was saying, that all the City employees, staff, Mayor and Administrator, contractors, everyone has done a good job. Chief Tennie had officers out today directing people in and out of the gas stations. With no loss of life, we have a lot to be thankful for. We've lived thru a lot in the past 30 years with Hugo, the ice storm and now Hurricane Matthew, but the people of Marion have always been pretty resilient. He thanked everyone for their help during this time.

Councilwoman Odessa Gregg commented that she had seen so much compassion from people in Marion and wants to say thank you and is proud to be a part of the City of Marion. Chief Tennie took her around to survey the damage and was appalled at some of the things she saw and how near trees fell to houses but did no damage to the facility. She thanked Mr. Oscar Foxworth, who lives in District 2 and was recently elected to County Council, for taking a person in Mullins to a safe place for just a "thank you" and she appreciates that. He also told her about some other things he was doing for some of the people, cooking and taking food to people in Mullins who were in need. He did this at no charge to anyone and his only request was a "thank you" from the persons who he did this for. Councilwoman Gregg is proud that so many people have been so cooperative. She has not heard anyone say that they were not willing to help someone who can't help themselves. We are a good example to other communities and to the state of South Carolina. She is glad we are getting help from the President and is proud of everybody. She thanked everyone for their concern and help. God answers prayers and we are going to continue to see that as long as we try to do the right thing for other people.

Councilman Emerson Hunt gave his sympathies to everyone in Marion with this disaster. A lot of times we don't believe we need each other until a tragedy happens and during times like this people realize they need each other. When the storm hit, it didn't matter if it was rich man's house or a poor man's house, when trees fell it didn't matter who lived there. That's when it hits you that we truly need each other to survive and sometimes when you lose it's an opportunity to rebuild. As bad as it is, we have to rebuild and we are a resilient people. Councilman Hunt asked that people be patient as we strive to get our City. This is the time to extend a helping hand to your neighbor, regardless of cultural background, let's do what we can for each other.

Councilman Frazier inquired about the truck route detour that was previously discussed. Mr. Ammons responded that we stopped with it because the County allowed them to park on the Heritage Sportswear property and that was going to be an issue with the County allowing them to park there, but

we can still address those parked in the City limits because we have an Ordinance to address that. It is Mr. Ammons opinion that the truck route is in limbo as long as they are allowed to park on the Heritage property. Mayor Pro-tem Atkinson commented that there were 8-10 trucks parked at Wal-Mart on the weekends. Mr. Ammons stated that there would also be 20-25 at the Heritage parking lot.

Mayor Bobby L. Davis asked Chief Tennie to comment on recent events. Chief Tennie stated that after the storm and while the power was still out, there were a dozen burglaries including Bridgers, Dollar General, Easterling School and Tiger Mart and at this time there are no leads. Mayor Pro-tem Atkinson asked if the culprits were on foot or bicycle and hopes that individuals would step up and help identify them. Chief Tennie stated that one police car lost one car in the flood waters on Withlacoochee. Mayor Davis thanked the Police Department for all they have done. He thanked the Lord for bringing us through the storm and that there was no loss of life in our community. He thanked Mr. Sanders for helping bring people out in boats, he drove the tractor with 3 boats behind it. As Mr. Hunt mentioned, we have some great people in Marion and we thank everyone for their hard work, especially our first responders. We have a long ways to go and Mayor Davis asks that everyone bears with us, have patience and keep the prayers going. We have staff running on little to no sleep, including Chief Trey Cooper was out all day and night, here and in Nichols, trying to help get people out. We have citizens cutting the trees in the street to help clear up the area and it is outstanding to see how we come together. He thanked the contractors who came into the area to help us begin to move trees out of the street. Mayor Davis wants everyone to understand that this is not a one day affair and we hope everyone will realize we are doing everything we can possible do. The Red Cross is in charge of the shelters, which is mandated by the state, and although we provided all the help we possibly could, the City of Marion is not in charge of the shelters. At one point there were 211 people in the shelter in Marion. Senator Tim Scott will be here to walk the grounds to see what has happened here. FEMA will be here either this week or next week. We need to keep Mayor Barbara Hopkins in our prayers. While she was out assisting others after the storm, she lost her home to a fire. Please call and let her know we're praying for her and her family. Mayor Davis commented that Mr. Frazier asked about bringing movies back. We planned last year to show movies at the Opera House and that's our plan now. Mayor Davis and Mr. Ammons spoke to Mr. Page, who will handle that for us. Judge Dan Barker will be at our next Town Hall meeting, along with our local judges, who will be able to answer questions regarding sentencing.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss a Personnel Matter in the Police Department and a Contractual Matter regarding the City Compost Site, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson; motion carried. Upon returning from Executive Session, Mayor Davis stated that no action was taken. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to return to regular session, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson; motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

Mayor Bobby L. Davis

City Clerk Pam Jones

Taped October 11, 2016